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## Ex-Twitter execs deny pressure to block Hunter Biden story

By FARNOUSH AMIRI

Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Former Twitter executives conceded Wednesday they made a mistake by blocking a story about Hunter Biden, the president's son, from the social media platform in the run-up to the 2020 election, but adamantly denied Republican assertions they were pressured by Democrats and law enforcement to suppress the story.

"The decisions here aren't straightforward, and hindsight is 20/20," Yoel Roth, Twitter's former head of trust and safety, testified to Congress.

"It isn't obvious what the right response is to a suspected, but not confirmed, cyberattack by another government on a presidential election."

He added, "Twitter erred in this case because we wanted to avoid repeating the mistakes of 2016."

The three former executives appeared before the House Oversight and Accountability Committee to testify for the first time about the company's decision to initially block from Twitter a New York Post article in October 2020 about the contents of a laptop belonging to Hunter Biden.

Continued on Page 2



President Joe Biden and his son, Hunter Biden, step off Air Force One, Saturday, Feb. 4, 2023, at Hancock Field Air National Guard Base in Syracuse, N.Y.

Associated Press

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# Ex-Twitter execs deny pressure to block Hunter Biden story

Continued from Front

Emboldened by Twitter's new leadership in billionaire Elon Musk — whom they see as more sympathetic to conservatives than the company's previous administration — Republicans used the hearing to push a long-standing and unproven theory that social media companies including Twitter are biased against them.

Committee Chairman Rep. James Comer said the hearing is the panel's "first step in examining the coordination between the federal government and Big Tech to restrict protected speech and interfere in the democratic process."

The hearing continues a years-long trend of GOP leaders calling tech company leaders to testify about alleged political bias. Democrats, meanwhile, have pressed the companies on the spread of hate speech and misinformation on their platforms.

The witnesses Republicans subpoenaed were Roth, Vijaya Gadde, Twitter's former chief legal officer, and James Baker, the company's former deputy general counsel.

Democrats brought a witness of their own, Anika Collier Navaroli, a former employee with Twitter's content moderation team. She testified last year to the House committee that investigated the Jan. 6 Capitol riot about Twitter's preferential treatment of Donald Trump until it banned the then-president from the site two years ago.

The hearing is the GOP's opening act into what lawmakers promise will be a widespread investigation into President Joe Biden and his family, with the tech companies another prominent target of their oversight efforts.

The White House criticized congressional Republicans for staging "a bizarre political stunt," hours after Biden's State of the Union address where he detailed bipartisan progress in his first two years in office.

"This appears to be the latest effort by the House Republican majority's most extreme MAGA members to question and relitigate

officials in the Trump administration had already warned that Russia was working to denigrate Joe Biden before the White House election.

ny files.

The documents and data largely show internal debates among employees over the decision to tem-

separate inquiry into potential coordination between Russia and Trump's 2016 presidential campaign. Republicans have long criticized the FBI's handling of both investigations.

"Even though many disagree with how Twitter handled the Hunter Biden matter, I believe that the public record reveals that my client acted in a manner that was fully consistent with the First Amendment," Baker said in defending his actions.

For Democrats, Navaroli countered the GOP argument by testifying about how Twitter allowed Trump's tweets despite the misinformation they sometimes contained.

Navaroli testified to the Jan. 6 committee last year that Twitter executives often tolerated Trump's posts despite their false statements and violations of the company's own rules because executives knew the platform was his "favorite and most-used ... and enjoyed having that sort of power."

There has been no evidence that Twitter's platform is biased against conservatives; studies have found the opposite when it comes to conservative media in particular. But the issue continues to pre-occupy GOP members of congress.

Rep. Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., called the hearing an "abuse of public resources."

"We could be talking about health care. We could be talking about bringing down the cost of prescription drugs. We could be talking about abortion rights, civil rights, voting rights," she said. "But instead we're talking about Hunter Biden's half-fake laptop story. I mean this is an embarrassment." □



Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., center, talks with House Oversight and Accountability Committee Chairman James Comer, R-Ky., and House Judiciary Committee Chair Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, during a House Committee on Oversight and Accountability hearing titled "Protecting Speech from Government Interference and Social Media Bias, Part 1: Twitter's Role in Suppressing the Biden Laptop Story" on Capitol Hill, Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2023, in Washington.

Associated Press

the outcome of the 2020 election," White House spokesperson Ian Sams said in a statement Wednesday. "This is not what the American people want their leaders to work on."

The New York Post reported weeks before the 2020 presidential election that it had received from Trump's personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, a copy of a hard drive from a laptop that Hunter Biden had dropped off 18 months earlier at a Delaware computer repair shop and never retrieved. Twitter blocked people from sharing links to the story for several days.

Months later, Twitter's then-CEO, Jack Dorsey, called the company's communications around the Post article "not great." He added that blocking the article's URL with "zero context" around why it was blocked was "unacceptable."

The newspaper story was greeted at the time with skepticism due to questions about the laptop's origins, including Giuliani's involvement, and because top of-

The Kremlin had interfered in the 2016 race by hacking Democratic emails that were subsequently leaked, and fears that Russia would meddle again in the 2020 race were widespread across Washington.

Just last week, lawyers for the younger Biden asked the Justice Department to investigate people who say they accessed his personal data. But they did not acknowledge that the data came from a laptop Hunter Biden is purported to have dropped off at a computer repair shop.

The issue was also reignited recently after Musk took over Twitter as CEO and began to release a slew of company information to independent journalists, what he has called the "Twitter Files."

"Thank god for Matt Taibbi. Thank god for Elon Musk for allowing us to show the world that Twitter was basically a subsidiary of the FBI," Rep. Nancy Mace, R-S.C., said, referencing one of the independent journalists with access to compa-

porarily censor links to the story about Hunter Biden. The tweet threads lacked substantial evidence of a targeted influence campaign from Democrats or the FBI, which has denied any involvement in Twitter's decision-making.

Rep. Dan Goldman, D-N.Y., called the hearing a "fishing expedition" seeking to rehearse bogus allegations claiming Biden somehow influenced his son's business dealings in Ukraine. Nonetheless, Republicans including Comer, R-Ky., have used the Post story, which has not been independently verified by The Associated Press, as the basis for what they claim is another example of the Biden family's "influence peddling."

One of Wednesday's witnesses, Baker, has been a frequent target of Republican scrutiny.

Baker was the FBI's general counsel during the opening of two of the bureau's most consequential investigations in history: the Hillary Clinton investigation and a





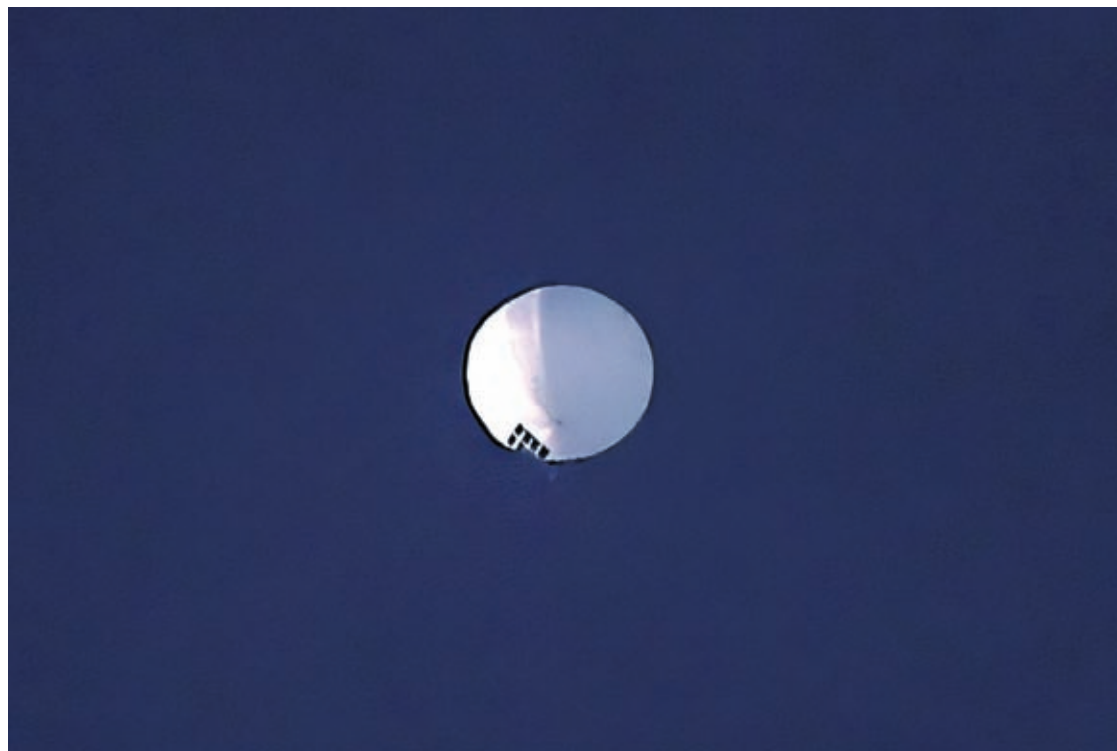
# Pentagon: China's conducted spy balloon program for years

By TARA COPP and  
LOLITA C. BALDOR

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Chinese balloon shot down off the South Carolina coast was part of a large surveillance program that China has been conducting for "several years," the Pentagon said Wednesday. When similar balloons passed over U.S. territory on four occasions during the Trump and Biden administrations, the U.S. did not immediately identify them as Chinese surveillance balloons, said Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder, the Pentagon press secretary. But he said "subsequent intelligence analysis" allowed the U.S. to confirm they were part of a Chinese spying effort and learn "a lot more" about the program.

He refused to provide any new details about those previous balloons. When pressed, Ryder would only say that the balloons flew over "sites that would be of interest to the Chinese." One of the possible incidents was last February. Maj. Gen. Kenneth Hara, the adjutant general in Hawaii, tweeted about a



A high altitude balloon floats over Billings, Mont., on Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2023.

Associated Press

balloon over Kauai a year ago. He said U.S. Indo-Pacific Command "detected a high-altitude object floating in air in the vicinity of the Hawaiian Islands" and sent up aircraft to intercept it. He said they visually confirmed it was an unmanned balloon with no identification markings. Ryder declined to say whether this was one of

the four previous incidents that the U.S. had discussed. Pacific Air Forces, the Air Force command in the Indo-Pacific, said that balloon was not shot down. The recent balloon was shot down by a U.S. military fighter jet on Saturday. The Navy and Coast Guard are still working to recover pieces of the downed balloon so they can be ana-

lyzed. China claims it was a civilian balloon used for meteorological research and sharply criticized the U.S. for shooting it down. Ryder said North American Aerospace Defense Command began tracking the balloon as it approached U.S. airspace. It passed north of the Aleutian Islands on Jan. 28 and moved largely over land across

Alaska and then into Canadian airspace before crossing back into the U.S. over northern Idaho on Jan. 31, U.S. officials have said.

Top administration officials were briefing members of Congress on the Chinese balloon surveillance program in classified sessions on Wednesday and Thursday.

Avril Haines, director of national intelligence; Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman; Gen. Glen VanHerck, head of U.S. Northern Command; and Colin Kahl, the under secretary of defense for policy, were among those expected to brief lawmakers. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the U.S. has briefed dozens of countries on the program, which officials said has been active over five continents. "The United States was not the only target," he said at a news conference with visiting NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg. Blinken said he and Stoltenberg had spoken about the "systemic and tactical challenges" that China poses to the alliance and the importance of combatting them. □

# Democrats win control of Pennsylvania House, end GOP rule

By MARK SCOLFORO

Associated Press

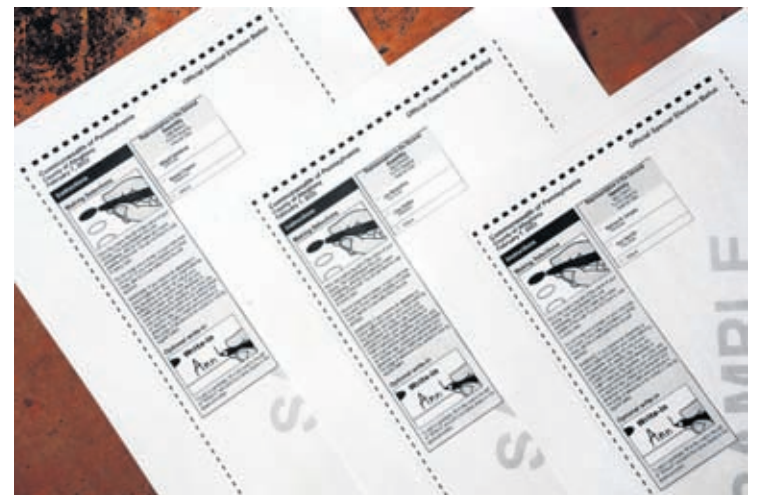
HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Democrats won control of the Pennsylvania House in special elections Tuesday, wresting partial power from Republicans for the first time in a dozen years in the competitive swing state. Democrats won all three vacant Pittsburgh-area House seats to claim a slim edge over Republicans, finally securing a majority they first appeared to have won in last November's General Election. Republicans still hold the Senate, creating a political division that could make it difficult for lawmakers to send priority bills to new Democratic Gov. Josh Shapiro. The special elections capped several months of electoral drama.

Republicans held a comfortable 113-90 House majority last year. But once-a-decade redistricting and strong performance in statewide races helped Democrats flip just enough seats in the fall election to win a 102-101 majority in the House. Or so it seemed. Three of those Democratic seats quickly became vacant, casting uncertainty over who actually controlled the chamber. Rep. Tony DeLuca died of cancer in October, shortly before winning reelection. Rep. Summer Lee resigned after also winning a congressional election and Rep. Austin Davis quit before being sworn in as lieutenant governor. That left Republicans with more people in the House than Democrats and led

to a political impasse. The chamber elected Democratic Rep. Mark Rozzi as speaker as the new session began on Jan. 3, but only after Republican leaders and a few other GOP members joined with all Democrats on the vote. The House has been frozen since Rozzi took over and has not passed internal operating rules, assigned members to committees or approved any legislation. Rozzi said last week he wants to retain the speakership when Democrats convene with their newly elected members. At a news conference in Pittsburgh late Tuesday the Democratic floor leader, Rep. Joanna McClinton, said the three Democratic candidates had been "tossed into the mixer really

quickly" to compete in the special elections. She noted Democrats have been in the House minority for 24 of the past 28 years. McClinton wants the speakership but said she did not want to "get ahead of the

days to come" as the election results are fully tabulated the certified, asking people to "please stay tuned to see what the will of this body will be" when the House returns to voting session. □



Sample ballots are photographed on Feb. 3, 2023, for the three Western Pennsylvania districts that will choose new State Representatives on Tuesday, Feb. 7.

Associated Press



# Parents at school where boy, 6, shot teacher prepare to sue

By **BEN FINLEY**

**Associated Press**

**NORFOLK, Va. (AP)** — The families of two students at a Virginia elementary school where a 6-year-old shot and wounded his teacher have filed notices of potential legal action against the school system over trauma they say the shooting inflicted on their children.

The parents of a first-grader said their daughter was in the classroom when the shooting occurred and "suffered emotional harm as a result." The parents also alleged that school officials failed to protect their daughter throughout the school year from bullying, harassment and assault.

A letter from the other child's family cites "injuries sustained during a school shooting on January 6, 2023." Their attorney did not elaborate further, although authorities have said that no children were physically harmed during the incident.

Both notices were dated Jan. 30. Newport News Public Schools provided the letters to The Associated Press after it requested



Students return to Richneck Elementary in Newport News, Va., on Monday, Jan. 30, 2023.

**Associated Press**

them. They were first reported by the Daily Press.

The notices were the latest fallout from a shooting that has sent shockwaves through the shipbuilding city near the Chesapeake Bay and drawn mounting criticism of school administrators.

Police have said the first-grade student brought his mother's 9 mm handgun

to Richneck Elementary and intentionally shot his teacher, Abby Zwerner, as she was teaching her first-grade class. Zwerner, 25, was hospitalized for nearly two weeks but is now recovering at home.

One of the legal notices was filed by "Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Nieves Jr.," and asks the school system to preserve potential evi-

dence, including emails regarding any student who allegedly bullied, harassed or assaulted their daughter. The parents of the other student were not named in their attorney's letter, although the notice makes a similar request for the school system to preserve evidence.

Zwerner's attorney, Diane Toscano, recently filed her

own legal notice, which lays out a series of damning allegations.

The document says that several hours before the shooting, at least three teachers and staff members warned school administrators that they believed the boy had brought a gun to school. The boy's backpack was searched, but no gun was found, and administrators did not remove the boy from class, lock down the school or call police.

Two days before the shooting, the boy allegedly "slammed" Zwerner's cellphone and broke it, according to her claim notice. He was given a one-day suspension, but when he returned to Zwerner's class the following day, he pulled a 9 mm handgun out of his pocket and shot her while she sat at a reading table, the notice states. The letter from Zwerner's attorney also states that the child constantly cursed at staff and teachers, chased students around and tried to whip them with his belt and once choked another teacher "until she couldn't breathe." □

# California proposal would reinstate prisoners' voting rights

By **STEFANIE DAZIO**

**Associated Press**

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — California voters could decide whether to reinstate voting rights to people in prison on felony convictions under a newly proposed constitu-

tional amendment.

It would be a major expansion of suffrage for incarcerated people if passed. California would join Maine and Vermont, as well as the District of Columbia, as the only states where fel-

ons never lose their right to vote, even while they are in prison, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

The California bill, introduced Monday by Assembly Member Isaac Bryan, proposes an amendment to the state constitution.

"Democracy thrives when everybody has a chance to have their voice heard," Bryan wrote on Twitter.

Two-thirds of each chamber of the state legislature must vote yes for the bill just for it to appear on the ballot as a proposition. Voters must then approve it by a simple majority for it to become a constitutional amendment.

California is currently among 21 states where felons only lose their right to vote while they are incar-

cerated, the conference says. The right is automatically reinstated upon release.

Some states' laws require probation and parole to be completed for the restoration of voting rights. In other states, people incarcerated on certain crimes lose their rights indefinitely after release.

The California Constitution currently disqualifies people who are incarcerated in state or federal prison from voting and restores the right upon their release. The law previously required felons to complete their parole period before getting back their right to vote; Californians approved the change to get rid of that requirement in a 2020 constitutional amendment.

David Cruz, an organizer

with nonprofit Initiate Justice who was released in September after 13 years in state prison, said he wanted to have his voice heard while he was incarcerated. "Despite what many people assume, people in prison care about the same political issues that we outside do," he said Wednesday during a news conference supporting the legislation.

Bryan, a Los Angeles Democrat and the chair of the Assembly's Committee on Elections, faces a tough sell for the two-thirds vote. While the Legislature is controlled by Democrats, the party has conservative representatives from rural areas and major progressive policies aren't guaranteed to pass. □



Barbed wire and a guard tower is seen at San Quentin State Prison on April 12, 2022, in San Quentin, Calif.

**Associated Press**



## MH17 inquiry: 'Strong indications' Putin OK'd missile supply

By MIKE CORDER

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) —

An international team of investigators said Wednesday it found "strong indications" that Russian President Vladimir Putin approved the supply of heavy anti-aircraft weapons to Ukrainian separatists who shot down Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 in 2014 with a Russian missile. However, members of the Joint Investigation Team said they had insufficient evidence to prosecute Putin or any other suspects and they suspended their 8½-year inquiry into the shooting down that killed all 298 people on board the Boeing 777 flying from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur.

Russia has always denied any involvement in the downing of the flight over eastern Ukraine on July 17, 2014, and refused to cooperate with the international investigation.

Dutch prosecutors said that "there are strong indications that the Russian president decided on supplying" a Buk missile system the weapon that downed



Digna van Boetzelaer, the Netherlands, Andy Kraag, the Netherlands, David McLean, Australia, Asha Hoe Soo Lian, Malaysia, Eric van der Sypt, Belgium, and Oleksandr Bannyk, Ukraine, take their seats for the Joint Investigation Team (JIT) news conference in The Hague, Netherlands, Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2023, on the results of the ongoing investigation into other parties involved in the downing of flight MH17 on 17 July 2014.

Associated Press

MH17 to Ukrainian separatists.

"Although we speak of strong indications, the high bar of complete and conclusive evidence is not reached," Dutch prosecutor Digna van Boetzelaer said, adding that without Russian cooperation, "the investigation has now reached its limit. All leads

have been exhausted."

She also said that, as head of state, Putin would have immunity from prosecution in the Netherlands. The team played a recording of an intercepted phone call in which they said Putin could be heard discussing the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

"Are we disappointed?"

No, because we think we came further than we had ever thought in 2014. Would we have liked to come further? Of course, yes," said Andy Kraag of the Dutch police.

The team informed relatives of those killed in the downing of MH17 of their findings before making them public. □

## Minister: 1 in 5 crimes in Spain now committed online

MADRID (AP) — Spain's government on Wednesday pledged stronger action against cybercrime, saying it has come to account for about a fifth of all offenses registered in the country.

Interior Minister Fernando Grande-Marlaska said police would be given additional staff, funding and resources to address online crime. He said reported cases of cybercrime were up 72% last year compared to 2019, and 352% compared to 2015.

"The ... decline in conventional crime and the increase in cybercrime has brought us to a turning point: today, one in every five crimes in Spain is committed online," he told a

press conference in Madrid.

Almost 90% of cybercrimes reported last year involved online fraud schemes, Grande-Marlaska said.

"This ... has a remarkable and negative impact on national interests, institutions, companies and citizens," he added.

On Tuesday, Spain's de-

fense minister approved the creation of a new military cyberoperations training school to further reinforce national security online.

Spain is among the countries that suffer the largest numbers of remote online attacks in the world, according to data from antivirus protection specialist ESET. Small businesses are particularly affected.

José Cano, Research Director at market intelligence firm IDC Spain, said a lack of talent and skills had left Spanish businesses exposed to the increasing sophistication of online criminals, who are innovating to bypass multi-factor authentication and other safeguards. □



Interior Minister of Spain Fernando Grande-Marlaska, center, arrives to the church in Algeciras, Spain, on Jan. 26, 2023.

Associated Press

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# Brazil pushes illegal miners out of Yanomami territory

By **FABIANO MAISONNAVE**  
and **EDMAR BARROS**

**ALTO ALEGRE, Brazil (AP)**

— Armed government officials with Brazil's justice, Indigenous and environment ministries Wednesday began to press thousands of illegal gold miners out of Yanomami Indigenous territory, citing widespread river contamination, famine and disease they have brought to one of the most isolated groups in the world.

People involved in illegal gold dredging streamed away from the territory on foot. The operation could take months. There are believed to be some 20,000 people engaged in the activity, often using toxic mercury to separate the gold. An estimated 30,000 Yanomami people live in Brazil's largest Indigenous territory, which covers an area roughly the size of Portugal and stretches across Roraima and Amazonas states in the northwest corner of Brazil's Amazon.

The authorities the Brazilian environmental agency Ibama, with support from the



**Miners leave the Yanomami Indigenous territory ahead of expected operations against illegal mining in Alto Alegre, Roraima state, Brazil, Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023.**

National Foundation of Indigenous Peoples and the National Guard found an airplane, a bulldozer, and makeshift lodges and hangars, and destroyed them as permitted by law. Two guns and three boats with 5,000 liters (1,320 gallons) of fuel were seized. They also

discovered a helicopter hidden in the forest and set it ablaze.

Ibama established a checkpoint next to a Yanomami village on the Uraricoera River to interrupt the miners' supply chain there. Agents seized the 12-meter (39-foot) boats, loaded

with a ton of food, freezers, generators, and internet antennas. The cargo will now supply the federal agents. No more boats carrying fuel and equipment will be allowed to proceed past the blockade. The large amount of supplies bound upriver could

**Associated Press**

indicate some of the gold miners were ignoring President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's promise to expel them after years of neglect under his predecessor, Bolsonaro, who tried to legalize the activity.

Other miners, however, sensed it was better to return to the city. On Tuesday, The Associated Press visited a makeshift port alongside the Uraricoera River, accessible only by three-hour drive on a dirt road. Dozens of gold miners arrived over the course of the day, some of them after walking for days through the forest, en route to state capital Boa Vista.

One of them, João Batista Costa, 61, told reporters the Yanomami are dying of hunger and that recent emergency food shipments have not been enough.

The federal government has declared a public health emergency for the Yanomami people, who are suffering from malnutrition and diseases such as malaria as a consequence of illegal mining. □

# 5 priests sentenced to 10 years for conspiracy in Nicaragua

**MEXICO CITY (AP)** — A Nicaraguan court has sentenced four Roman Catholic priests to 10 years in prison on conspiracy charges stemming from long-standing government allegations that the church backed illegal pro-democracy protests.

A human rights group in the Central American country quickly denounced the sentences handed down Monday and made known by lawyers of the Legal Defense Unit.

It was the latest chapter

in a crackdown on the church by President Daniel Ortega.

On Sunday, a fifth priest was sentenced to 10 years in prison on the same charges.

The priests were convicted in closed-door trials in which government-appointed defenders acted as the priests' attorneys.

Those sentenced Monday had worked with Matagalpa Bishop Rolando Álvarez, and one had been rector of the privately run Juan Pablo II University in the capital of Managua.

Álvarez is under house arrest on charges of conspiracy and "damaging the Nicaraguan government and society," and is set to be sentenced soon.

Two seminary students and a cameraman who worked for the diocese were also sentenced Monday. All six of the defendants were

arrested last year, and all were stripped of the right to ever hold political office. The Nicaraguan Human Rights Center described the sentences as "a legal aberration."

"This is an insult to the law, an insult to people's intelligence, an insult to the international community and the international agencies for the protection of human rights," the center said in a statement Tuesday.

Álvarez, the bishop, had been a key religious voice in discussions of Nicaragua's future since 2018, when a wave of protests against Ortega's government led to a sweeping crackdown on opponents. On Sunday, Rev. Óscar Danilo Benavidez, a priest in Mulukuku in northern Nicaragua, was sentenced for conspiracy and spreading false information. He had been arrested Aug. 14.

The government arrested dozens of opposition leaders in 2021, including seven potential presidential candidates. They were sentenced to prison last year in quick trials that also were closed to the public.

Ortega has contended the pro-democracy protests were carried out with foreign backing and with the support of the Catholic Church. Last year, he expelled the nuns from Mother Teresa's Sisters of Charity religious order and the papal nuncio, the Vatican's top diplomat in Nicaragua. Last August, Pope Francis told thousands of people gathered in St. Peter's Square that he was closely following with "worry and sorrow" events in Nicaragua that involve "persons and institutions."

He didn't mention the denunciations of the priests or Álvarez. □



**A poster featuring Bishop Rolando Álvarez and Pope Francis hangs inside the Cathedral in Matagalpa, Nicaragua, Aug. 19, 2022.**

**Associated Press**



## Minister Endy Croes and Prime Minister Everlyn Wever-Croes receive visit from Dutch university

(Oranjestad)—On January 23rd, The Prime Minister Wever-Croes and Minister Croes received a visit from a group of 34 university students who made a academic trip to Aruba.

This visit involves students from the law, public administration and integral safety science programs at the Haagse Hogeschool University in The Netherlands. The students are also doing a Minor course related to Kingdom relations.

This visit to Aruba is a part of that Minor. The purpose of this is for the students to explore the similarities and

differences between The Netherlands and the Dutch Caribbean within the Dutch Kingdom. The Minor course emphasizes the relationship between the islands in the Dutch Kingdom, The Netherlands and The European Union.

The students posed different questions to the Prime Minister and Minister Croes about education on Aruba and how this can be improved. All questions were answered and the students seemed satisfied with their visit. Minister Croes wishes the students all the best with their studies. □



(Oranjestad)—The islands of Aruba, Curacao and St. Maarten have all been chosen by National Geographic to create the series 'Kustwacht Caribisch Gebied' (Caribbean Coast Guard), where the day to day life of the coast guard team is showcased.

On Monday night, the first few episodes of the new season were broadcasted to the press and invitees at the Caribbean Cinemas Theater in Aruba. This season once again explores the missions of the Caribbean coast guard around the Aruban, Curacao, Bonaire and Sint Maarten waters, which often involve angst and danger in the prevention of drug and human trafficking, or in other emergency cases.

Shalick Clement, spokesperson for the Caribbean Coast Guard show, signaled in an interview with Aruba Today that the first

season premiered back in 2020, and that they have been working with producer Remco Garcia from Goya Productions for 3 years now. Garcia was the one who petitioned for the docu-series about the coast guard for National Geographic, which the network expressed their interest in as well.

Before shooting, they had to go over the pros and cons, because they think it's important that the public get an insight in what their duty entails, what the challenges look like and how they handle captives and suspects.

"I think the docu-series provides great insight about that, and it's become successful too. That's why we film a new season, which we decided to premiere in Aruba so the locals can see what the job entails," Clement stated.

It is no secret that the coast guard confiscates huge

## The second season of Caribbean Coast Guard documentary premieres February 12<sup>TH</sup>

amounts of drug cargo at sea, but this also invites risks for the guards, as they might put themselves and their families in dangerous positions when confronted with people in organized crime. Clement ensures that consent has been asked from the guards who participated in the show prior to shooting. The islands are very small too, and many people know the majority of the cast. "Whenever we intercept high risk situations where firearms are involved, we always make sure to cover the guards' faces, so that the criminals can't

know which agents were involved. Even though we deal with criminals, we treat them humanely. We leave the rest to the judge or the Public Ministry to make their own verdict based on evidence and records of the investigation," Clement finalized.

Additionally, one of the show's cast members is someone Aruba is already familiar with, due to the fact that this person is a renowned athlete in the sport of bowling on the island. Abigail Dammers, who is the quartermaster at the Coast Guard of Aruba,

also stars in the show. It was mentioned to Aruba Today that filming started in 2020 during the pandemic, which stretched out the filming schedule of the first season up to last year: "It was a filming process that lasted about 2 years to get to where we are right now with production," Dammers said.

Dammer also expressed that this was a once in a lifetime experience for her, seeing as she is an athlete and "it's not every day that people make a documentary about your job, which will be shown around the world. When they approached me, I initially didn't want to do it, but I became curious about how it would go, and it was a great experience after all," she finalized.

The second season of 'Kustwacht Caribisch Gebied' is made up of 8 episodes, and will be premiering on February 12th in The Netherlands. Those interested in watching the series can also find a link on the show's social media platform. This season will focus on Aruba, as the first season featured the Curacao coast guard. □





## Paseo Herencia is always fun and exciting to visit



**NOORD—** Paseo Herencia offers a variety of shopping, dining and entertainment options in an outdoor center located in the heart of Palm Beach – walking distance from the high-rise hotels.

### Shopping

The Paseo Herencia stores offer a great collection in beach wear, clothing, perfume, shoes, jewelry, souvenirs and much more. Pamper yourself by visiting Maggy's and enjoy their salon services and shop for your favorite beauty products. Aruba Aloe has that perfect gift to bring back home, all made with natural ingredients. Other brand favorites are Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Aldo, Carmen Steffens, Nike store, Pandora and many more.

### Restaurants

Start with a breakfast meal at Paseo Herencia

offering unique breakfast options such as Drunk's Denial with their Make it Your Own Crêpe Bar offering sweet and savory crêpe flavors and the option to booze it up with their Mimosa crêpe (mandarin soaked in champagne), Pina Colada (pineapples in coconut rum), Bourbon Apple, Brandy Apricot, Whiskey Pear and more. Location can be found by following the bakery smell upon arrival. Another option is Seabarita offering you delicious breakfast options ranging from Huevos Rancheros to empanadas surrounded by a cozy picnic setting with streetside view. Go Argentinian style at Che Bar and try their delicious omelet with chorizo/ham, mozzarella, onions, peppers, and tomatoes served with skillet potatoes and toast. Looking for something for the whole family? Visit TGI Fridays and choose between waffle, omelets, breakfast sandwiches and tacos starting at \$8. These restaurants are also open

for lunch & dinner offering you a variety of cuisine choices. If you're looking for more unique concepts, join us for dinner at Xixon Restaurant greatly known in Miami for their Spanish inspired dishes with top notch flavors and the largest wine variety or visit The Lazy Turtle and try their exotic African dish "Kuvuta Kuku" accompanied by their tasty lazy cocktails. Coming for drinks? Sip and have a good time at the Bulldog Aruba located in the center of the Plaza. Open till late.

### VIP Cinema

Visit the one-of-a-kind Caribbean Cinemas VIP on the second floor of Paseo Herencia and enjoy your favorite movies in the most comfortable reclining seats with high quality screens with the latest projection and 7.1 Dolby surround sound and not to forget their delicious buttery bag of popcorn.

### Entertainment

Catch live shows from Monday to Thursday and Sunday at 8pm on the Paseo center stage and the nightly water shows at 7:30pm, 8:30pm and 9:30pm. Looking for some adrenaline? Visit the Airsoft experience located behind The Lazy Turtle. Snap Instagramable pictures at the Angel Wings located between Pandora and Free Spirit or the Flying mosaic hearts located behind King Churros.

Parking up to two hours is free when shopping, dining or catching a movie at Paseo Herencia. Just present your purchase receipt at our parking cashier.

To learn more about our specials and events, visit the Paseo Herencia website [www.paseoherencia.com](http://www.paseoherencia.com).





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## ARINA launches new website for investors

ORANJESTAD – The Aruba Investment Agency (ARINA) recently launched its new website, [www.investinaruba.com](http://www.investinaruba.com), at the business networking event held at Fort Zoutman by the Minister of Economic Affairs, Communication, and Sustainable Development, Mr. Geoffrey Wever.

The website includes up-to-date information about investment opportunities on the island. Both local and foreign investors can visit the website for information about the many business opportunities in Aruba's Promising Sectors and get in-depth knowledge about the many ongoing investment projects in Aruba.

### Website features

Not only does the website

boast a sleek modern design, but it also features detailed information regarding the investment climate of Aruba.

"You will never again have to miss out on up-to-date information regarding investment opportunities in Aruba," said Mr. Geoffrey Wever, Minister of Economic Affairs, Communication,

and Sustainable Development.

ARINA invites you to explore the new website. Find out the main reasons to choose Aruba as an investment destination besides the tourism sector. Get the latest news on business-related topics and upcoming events. Learn all the 'ins and outs' about doing busi-



ness in Aruba, the Promising Sectors, and various business opportunities this offers both local and foreign investors.

The Aruba Investment Agency (ARINA), an operational unit of the Department of Economic Affairs, Commerce and Industry (DEACI), is the government investment agency that promotes and facilitates investment in Aruba. ARINA aims to attract new invest-

ments in the Promising Sectors of Aruba. Its main objective is to make it as easy as possible for investors to establish their companies in Aruba.

ARINA works closely with its strategic partners to facilitate this process for investors, providing information, assistance, and advice. The agency helps and advises investors in establishing, rolling out, and expanding their business activities in Aruba. □



ORANJESTAD – The Minister of Tourism and Public Health Dangui Oduber, is pleased to announce the first liver tumor removal surgery in Aruba using the Stryker Sonopet.

## First liver surgery in the Dutch Caribbean using Sonopet

This historic surgery was possible thanks to the collaboration of the Horacio Oduber Hospital with the Universitair Medisch Centrum in Utrecht (UMC Utrecht). The Sonopet is used in the specialized field of neurosurgery but also for liver surgery.

Surgeon Jan Ringers, who has been working for ten months at the Hospital in Aruba, has lots of experience with this tool in the Netherlands. When the situation presented with a patient who was pending going abroad to remove a liver tumor, the surgeon took the challenge to perform this op-

eration in Aruba since the Sonopet was available at the HOH. Jointly with the Surgery Room, Dr. Ringers performed the surgery successfully. It was the first surgery of its kind in the Dutch Caribbean.

The entire team of the HOH is very proud as it was for the first time a patient with this medical issue did not have to be sent abroad for this procedure. With the cooperation between the HOH and the UMC Utrecht, the HOH acquired the Sonopet for neurosurgery. Originally the Sonopet is used in brain surgery, but general surgeons can



also use it. It entails a considerable advancement in quality health care in Aruba. Patients with similar health issues should no longer be sent abroad for care. They can be treated in Aruba and can recover with the care of their loved ones.

The Sonopet makes a con-

siderable difference in a variety of surgeries. The cooperation with the UMC Utrecht is giving outstanding results with surgeries performed in Aruba. This essential step considerably contributes to medical care in Aruba and offers new opportunities for procedures beneficial to the patients. □



## History of fishing in Aruba

**ORANJESTAD — Fishing has been a family tradition for ages in Aruba. Our ancestors used to fish for a living. Even though nowadays you don't see them often we still have some passionate fishermen on the island that go out every day in search for fish to feed their families and serve our local market. One of these fishermen is Gregory Wernet.**

The so-called Continental Bank between Aruba and the opposite coast reaches a depth of about 650 feet. The sea is very rich in fish here. Since the time of the indigenous native people fish and other sea creatures such as turtles, octopus squids, conch and many type of crustaceans have formed a means of subsistence for the native Aruban inhabitants. Especially along the west coast of the island where the fishing grounds are settlements of fishermen. Until the arrival of the oil -industry Aruban fishermen could supply Aruba's wants.

As a source of income, however, fishing did not amount too much. In the beginning of the 1900's approximately 160 people earn their living in this branch of this industry. Rancho, which stands for a shed, nowadays east Oranjestad, was the head quarter and remains the fishermen's settlement. Savaneta, Noord, Santa Cruz all had their fishermen's villages. At a rough estimate there were about a hundred small fishing boats

during that time.

The Arubans were mainly engaged in coastal fishing, using rowing-boats or small sailing-boats, and lines or dragnets and canisters in shallow water. When fishing with deep-sea lines just over the bottom of the sea the boat is kept in place by means of a piece of rock serving as an anchor. The two most important species of fish by far caught in this manner are the pargo or red snappers and a variety of groupers like the mero, jeanpao and the wowo di boyo.

Cruising off the coast the Aruban fisherman patiently waits for a fish willing to snap at the bait on the drag-line, in nets and traps. Veritable giants are sometimes caught. Barracudas weigh from 9 to 44 pounds and measure from 3 to almost 7 feet. The king-fish has a weight from 22 to 44 pounds; the moclat may tip the scales at 155, whilst garfish, having a length of nine feet, weigh over 132 pounds.

Most fish caught is used for their own consumption, to feed their families and some are being sold in the market to local restaurants.

### Fisherman Gregory Wernet

Gregory Wernet is a well-known fisherman from Santa Cruz. His father taught him fishing when he was a small child. Gregory has two sons, Jordan and Jordanny, which he taught fishing too, when they were only 3 years old and he



takes them fishing with him. Fishing has been a family tradition for quite a long time and even his grandson Willvion of 7 years old is following his grandfather steps. This is the sixth generation of fishermen in their family.

They go deep sea fishing. There they catch red snapper, grouper and amberjack. They usually fish for 15 hours a day, but now due to the covid-19 measurements they go fishing from 5 in the morning until 8 o'clock at night or even sometimes from 8 at night till 5 in the morning. The day before they prepare all their fishing tools such as the Lines, lures, spears, and load their boat with fishing reels, batteries, fill the gasoline tank, lights and some food and beverages. For bait he uses sardines, squid and the small fish known in Aruba as piskechi. The have two boats they use for fishing. 'Virgen del Valle' which is parked at the pier by the Seaport and 'Padrot' which they have at home.

The fish they catch they take home to their families and they also sell it to their clients. Gregory is proud to be a fisherman. It is a honest and humble job but with it he is able to feed his family even during hard times. It is a very dangerous job and you have to spend many hours on the sea, waiting patiently and risking your life while fighting a big fish and big waves but the adrenaline it brings with it but also just sitting there

listening to the sound of the waves and enjoying the marvelous view that nature

has to offer is all worth it. □

Source: Etnia Nativa





## 11-year-old Fabio Alexander fights for his dream of playing soccer for Real Madrid



(Oranjestad)—Fabio Alexander Montilla is an 11-year-old boy with a love for soccer. He currently plays for the local club RCA and Team Dreyer, with whom he recently to Colombia with to play in the Future Soccer Cup Tournament (FSC). In March, Fabio Alexander had the once

in a lifetime opportunity to play in Madrid, Spain, in the Real Madrid Foundation World Challenge Tournament 2023.

Last year, Alexander was a part of the Real Madrid Foundation Clinic that took place in Aruba. Through this, coupled with his talent,

dedication, discipline and love for soccer, Alexander received an invitation to travel to Madrid and realize the dream that a lot of kids, adults and soccer fanatics have: playing soccer in Madrid for the foundation of one of the biggest soccer club in the world, Real Madrid.

"I'm very happy that I received an invitation. It's going to be a once in a lifetime experience that I will never forget. I'm very excited to play in Madrid and even meet some of the professional players, if I'm lucky," Alexander expressed.

To make this dream a reality, Alexander's parents has to cover the travel costs to Madrid. Bon Dia Aruba



talked with Alexander's mother, Claudia Meriño, who explained more about the costs.

"It's a big sum, but we are working hard to make his dream come true. It's not cheap, we have to play for everything. They are offering a package that includes accommodation, food, transport and a few tours, plus uniform and entry for the tournament for the plus one. However, even with all these things

covered, it's still very expensive and we still have to pay for Alexander and his plus one's flight," Meriño explained.

The tournament will take place from March 31st to April 8th. If anyone is interest in contributing in Alexander's dream, Claudia is available through phone call at 7307325. "Any help or contribution, no matter how big or small, will be greatly appreciated," Meriño finalized. □

## Vacation Rental Professionals of Aruba thank the Police Force Security of vacation rental properties is extremely important for our tourism

ORANJESTAD – Recently, some acts of burglary committed in vacation rental properties caught attention, as did the fact that those responsible were caught. During the months in which the burglaries were taking place, the Vacation Rental Professionals of Aruba (VRPA) were aware of this and were working behind the curtain together with the Police Department to follow the steps of the burglars and help catch those responsible.

These incidents are regrettable since they affect our visitors, the owners of the properties, and in the end also our tourism in general, VRPA said in a press release.

The association said that the security of vacation rental properties is extremely important for the experience of the visitor. The fact that those responsible for the burglaries were caught must not rule out that there could be more people involved or that after some time they will continue with burglaries, so it is important to remain vigilant.

In the context of maintaining long-term security of the properties, VRPA gives some tips and advice for best practices for owners of vacation rentals as well as property managers. While each vacation rental has its own security needs, there are some important basic



practices to prevent burglaries.

### Light and motion detectors installation

Most burglaries take place at night or before dawn, since the darkness provides the burglars with better chances of hiding in the dark and avoid being seen. Light installations and motion detectors turn on lights and indicate that there is a person on the property, and can help make identifying the burglar easier. Motion detectors can also be installed indoors.

### Vacation rental automation

Nowadays, many of the automation installations, "smart", give you control of your property from an app in your phone, tablet or laptop. Be it lights or any electronic device, these can be programmed with a timer to be turned on or off. It is important that each programming, be it light or electronic device, has a different time in which it is turned on each day in order to

avoid giving a pattern that can be deduced by the potential intruder.

### 'Neighborhood watch'

For many years, different neighborhoods can be noted having a neighborhood watch. VRPA applauds the fact that neighbors organize as a neighborhood and have good communication for the security of every house in the area. Through a chat group, every neighbor has communication for any unusual development. Introduction of a neighborhood watch can help control burglaries. For vacation rentals, the group chat can be notified when there is a guest and how long they will be staying.

### Security camera installation

Security cameras are essential for vacation rental properties. Installation of exterior cameras on a property, whether managed by a security company or by the owner of the property, gives the advantage of always having a view of the property. These days security cameras give the owner the option of receiving a notification on their smartphone for every movement or sound. There are also cameras that have the option of speaking or alerting the person to leave the property through your phone.

Another very efficient option is installing a 'ring doorbell'. The ring doorbell is a smart doorbell that includes the installation of cameras that connect automatically with a phone and give live access when a person is in front of the house. All these installations give the owner of vacation rentals a chance to contact the police a lot faster to notify of any suspicious activity.

### Insurance

An important aspect for vacation rental is also to have insurance for burglary. This certainly helps in case those properties are victim of burglary, and also gives guests a sense of security.

VRPA advises all companies that manage vacation rentals to carry out an analysis of each property and inform each owner on how to improve security of their property. VRPA thanks the Police Force of Aruba for their great efforts and work solving these burglaries, as well as thanking the alert community. For the protection of vacation rentals and our tourism it is important to remain vigilant for any unusual activities, and if anyone notices something strange, contact police immediately as well as the company managing the property. □



# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

## ACROSS

- 1 Guinness of film
- 5 Get naked
- 10 Costa —
- 11 Option
- 12 Love, Latin-style
- 13 Forest worker
- 14 Genuine
- 16 Something for nothing
- 20 Benders
- 23 Knight's title
- 24 Seaport setting
- 25 Hue
- 27 IRS employee
- 28 Dead ducks
- 29 Site of some diners
- 32 Christmas season
- 36 Wan
- 39 Concept
- 40 German subs
- 41 Castle circler
- 42 Chili need
- 43 Building wings

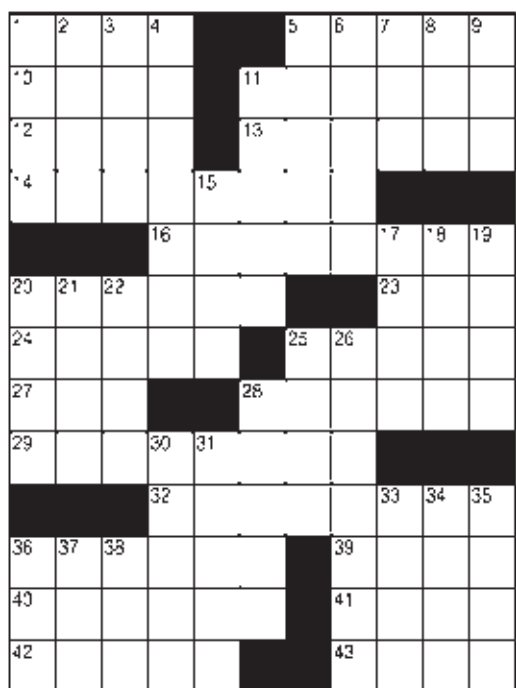
## DOWN

- 1 Swift horse
- 2 Long ride
- 3 Bus. sch. course
- 4 Wine bottles
- 5 Hue
- 6 Copier need
- 7 Equip
- 8 Water cooler
- 9 Pricing word
- 11 Calls out
- 15 Stew
- 17 Cruise stop
- 18 Designer Christian



Yesterday's answer

- 19 Goes astray
- 20 Wound reminder
- 21 Possum of the comics
- 22 Pro —
- 25 Write an app
- 26 Former
- 28 Adorns, in a way
- 30 Singer Bob
- 31 Legal actions
- 33 Pop star
- 34 Start a hand
- 35 Puts away
- 36 Place for a pint
- 37 Penny prez
- 38 Mauna —



2-9

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

2-9

## CRYPTOQUOTE

CU NKQ XK EKH MKWZ RZ C  
DSIMM EKH GZ MKWZX! CU C  
XK EKH MKWZ NKQ C  
DSIMM EKH MKWZ. — DIRQZM  
GZFBZHH

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: LOVE DOESN'T MAKE THE WORLD GO 'ROUND. LOVE IS WHAT MAKES THE RIDE WORTHWHILE. — FRANKLIN P. JONES



Workers install two of 105 solar panels on the roof of a barn Thursday, Aug. 27, 2009, north of Hesperus, Colo. Associated Press

# How fresh tax credits, rebates can launch eco home updates

By ANNIE MILLERBERND of NerdWallet

If you've been holding off on home improvements, a new law signed last year and now in effect as of Jan. 1, 2023, may provide a fresh incentive.

The Inflation Reduction Act, or IRA, includes tax credits and rebates for homeowners who make energy-saving updates to their homes. Credits for improvements like new solar panels, windows, doors and air conditioners are available now, while rebates for larger energy-efficient updates are expected to become available later this year or next year.

Here's what to know about these perks, plus tips to plan your projects.

## TAX CREDITS FOR SMALLER UPDATES

The IRA includes tax credits for around-the-house eco-friendly updates. Eligible purchases include energy-efficient windows, doors, insulation, central air conditioners and home energy audits. An IRS fact sheet outlines eligible home improvements.

Tax credits reduce your tax liability for the year, says Los Angeles-based certified public accountant Michael DiBernardo. □

# Classifieds

## Marriott Surf Club

Palm beach  
2 BR ,2 Bath Platinum  
Ocean Side ( light house building)  
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## Aruba Divi Phoenix

Palm Beach  
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Building C with 13 weeks remain  
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## Barcelo Resort

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3 Bedroom 3 Bath  
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## House For sale

Alto Vista Noord  
2 BR , 2 Bath fully furnished  
With and apartment Ocean view  
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2 BR WK # 9 and 10 room # 1302  
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1 BR WK # 9 and 10 room # 1329  
Pool /view \$8 K each  
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## Dutch Village

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Price :\$7 K  
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## Divi Village Golf

Eagle Beach  
1 BR WK #9 room # 4117  
18 weeks remain  
Price : \$ 8 K  
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## Renaissance Ocean Suites

Private Islands  
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Ocean Front  
Price :\$10 K  
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johnnypaesch@gmail.com

## Eagle Resort

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1 BR WK # 8 room # 4561  
Saturday check in 4th floor  
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johnnypaesch@gmail.com  
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## Casa Del Mar 2BR/2B:

Week 2/Unit 1113 (18k);  
Week 5/Unit 1315 (20k);  
Week 8/Unit 1113 (19k);  
Week 8/Unit 1409 (19k);  
Week 10/Unit 1207 (17k);  
Week 13/Unit 1509 (14k);  
Week 14/Unit 1308 (14k); and,  
Week 15/Unit 1217 (10k).  
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US(Call/Text): (860)992-3890

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## Ambassador suites

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## Ambassador Suites

Eagle Beach  
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Price :\$7 K each  
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## Ambassador Suites

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1 BR WK # 8 Room # 1226 \$8K  
1 BR WK # 8 Room # 1330 \$7K  
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## Divi Village Golf

1 BR WK # 3 and 4  
Room # 2216  
Birdie 4  
28 weeks remain on each  
Price :\$9 K each  
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5 min walk to the beach  
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www.halleytimetravelaruba.online

## Divi Village Golf

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Studio WK #6 room#4226  
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www.halleytimetravelaruba.online

## House For sale

Beach Front Malmok  
6 BR 6 bath  
Price :\$3 Million  
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johnnypaesch@gmail.com  
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## Condo for sale

Bubali Noord  
2 BR 2bath town house  
5 min drive to eagle beach  
Price :\$275K  
Call :0 11-297-6301307  
johnnypaesch@gmail.com  
www.halleytimetravelaruba.online

## Divi Village

Eagle Beach  
Studio WK #7 and 8 room #3405  
12/14 weeks remain on the contract  
Price :7K each  
Call :0 11-297-6301307  
johnnypaesch@gmail.com  
www.halleytimetravelaruba.online

## Divi Village

Eagle Beach  
Studio WK #9 room#3307 \$7K  
14 weeks remain on the contract  
Studio WK #10 room #3203 \$7K  
10 weeks remain on the contract  
Call :0 11-297-6301307  
johnnypaesch@gmail.com  
www.halleytimetravelaruba.online

## Dutch Village

Eagle Beach  
Studio WK #4 room #129  
22 weeks remain Non mandatory  
Expire :2028  
Price :\$7K  
Call :0 11-297-6301307  
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Dakota Tel. 588 7364

#### San Nicolas:

San Lucas Tel. 584 5119

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Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002  
Urgent Care 586 0448  
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Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

### TAXI SERVICES

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Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

### TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

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FAVI- Visually Impaired  
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Alcoholics Anonymous  
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous  
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Fundacion Contra Violencia  
Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes  
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# 'Knock at the Cabin' twists the home invasion horror

By **JAKE COYLE**  
AP Film Writer

Knock. Knock. It being mid-winter (typically a doldrums in movie theaters), it's a cozy relief to be able to throw open the door and find M. Night Shyamalan standing there with his near-annual helping of high-concept thriller. His last one, "Old," about vacationers trapped on a private beach where aging is accelerated a kind of high-speed "White Lotus" fittingly arrived in the summer. But this quieter, gloomier time of year seems perfectly designed for Shyamalan to burst in with his signature brand of big-screen bonkers and some new twists to the age-old question of "Who's there?"

"Knock at the Cabin," which opens in theaters Friday, is at once like every previous Shyamalan film and a thrilling departure. Gimmicky set-up? Check. Queasy spiritualism? You bet. But as a self-contained, handsomely staged thriller — after the knocking, the film takes place almost entirely within a remote cabin Shyamalan's latest finds the filmmaker working in an appealingly straightforward and stripped-down fashion. We have our cabin, our small cast of characters and, above all, our posterous premise. Though



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Dave Bautista, from left, Abby Quinn, and Nikki Amuka-Bird in a scene from "Knock at the Cabin."

Shyamalan's films often flirt with higher powers and existential conundrums, nothing reigns in his movie universe more than The Concept. And in the gripping "Knock at the Cabin," he carefully teases it, exploits it and dutifully follows it to its ultimate conclusion with the command of a seasoned professional.

Just outside a cabin in a wooded forest, 7-year-old Gwen (Kristen Cui) is collecting grasshoppers in a glass jar. "I'm just going to learn about you for a while," she tells one as she slides it into the jar. Shya-

malan, too, is gathering specimens into a hermetically sealed vessel for inquiry. One calmly walks right out of the woods. A hulking, bespectacled man (Dave Bautista) strides up to Gwen, politely introduces himself as Leonard and makes kindly chit chat while occasionally glancing back over his shoulder. Then he says the reason he's there makes him heartbroken. He describes it as "maybe the most important job in the history of the world."

Before you exclaim "Podiatry!" Leonard's job turns out

to be a tad more sinister. He and three others, who soon also emerge from the forest, are there, as Leonard patiently lays out, to give Gwen's parents a choice that will dictate the fate of the world. After forcing their way into the cabin, Leonard flanked by Sabrina (Nikki Amuka-Bird), Redmond (Rupert Grint) and Adriane (Abby Quinn) informs Gwen's two dads, Eric (Jonathan Groff) and Andrew (Ben Aldridge) that they must make a sacrifice to stave off global apocalypse. Each has come to the cabin after

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all-consuming visions — like warped versions of those that preoccupy the characters in "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" of the doom that awaits if the family in this random cabin doesn't, within hours, kill one of themselves.

This isn't, like last year's "Barbarian," another chastening example of the dangers that lurk within the poorly chosen Airbnb, (though I, for one, will henceforth not be clicking "Shyamalanian allegory" in all future bookings). This is, like most of Shyamalan's schemes, a sincere metaphorical proposition. What's more important: Preserving one's family or the larger world?

There are, of course, reasons to be dubious of strangers who turn up in your vacation rental asking for blood to spare humanity. Are they delusional? Has this gay couple been targeted? Do their demands not sound a little like the nuttiness of some of today's real-world attackers? Eric and Andrew sense the same kind of brutality that they've experienced all their lives as gay men. Flashbacks to their past, including moments of bliss and pain, suggest this lurid episode is part of a larger narrative of a loving family forged against a harsh world. "Always together" is the couple's mantra. □

## At last: Streisand memoir 'My Name is Barbra' coming Nov. 7

By **HILLEL ITALIE**  
AP National Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Barbra Streisand's very long and very long-awaited memoir, a project she has talked about for years, is coming out this fall. Viking, a Penguin Random House imprint, will release "My Name is Barbra" on Nov. 7. Her memoir, fitting for a superstar of the grandest ambitions, is listed at 1,040 pages. "The book is, like Barbra herself, frank, funny, opinionated, and charming," according to the publisher. "She recounts her early struggles to become

an actress, eventually turning to singing to earn a living; the recording of some of her acclaimed albums; the years of effort involved in making "Yentl"; her direction of "The Prince of Tides"; her friendships with figures ranging from Marlon Brando to Madeleine Albright; her political advocacy; and the fulfillment she's found in her marriage to James Brolin."

"My Name Is Barbra" also is the title of a 1965 Streisand album and television special.

Publishers have sought a Streisand memoir for de-

cades, with the singer telling Jimmy Fallon in 2021 that Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis asked her to write one in the early 1980s, when the former first lady was an editor at Doubleday. During an Associated Press interview in 2009, Streisand mentioned that she had been writing chapters about her life, in longhand. "I go back and forth," Streisand said at the time. "Do I really want to write about my life? Do I really want to relive my life? I'm not sure."

The memoir was first announced in 2015, and scheduled for two years

later, although it didn't have a title at the time. A reference to it on her web site, posted in 2015, was later pulled.

Financial terms for the memoir were not disclosed. Streisand was represented by Robert Barnett, the Washington attorney whose other clients have ranged from Barack Obama to Elton John.

Streisand, 80 has long been wary of discussing her private life, including her relationships with actor Elliott Gould and producer Jon Peters. She has been married to Brolin since 1998. □



This cover image released by Viking shows "My Name is Barbra" by Barbra Streisand. Associated Press



# Who has next for James' scoring record: Luka? Tatum? Anyone?

By **BRIAN MAHONEY**  
AP Basketball Writer

James Harden averaged 36 points a few seasons ago. Devin Booker once scored 70 in one game.

There are many more players doing much more scoring now than when LeBron James began his NBA career in 2003-04. Tracy McGrady led the league with 28 points per game that season, a mark that nine players would currently be surpassing.

With the faster pace of play and the plethora of 3-pointers, there are plenty of chances for players to pile up the points. But a look at Harden shows how hard it will be for even an elite scorer to keep doing it long enough to challenge wherever the scoring mark is when James finally retires. He averaged 36.1 points in 2019-20 and 34.3 the next season. Maintain those kinds of numbers for 75 games a season and a player would be flirting with 40,000 points in a mere 15 years though that still probably wouldn't be enough to reach where James will put the record that's now 38,390.

But then circumstances changed. A trade first to Brooklyn and then Philadelphia meant having to share shots with fellow All-Stars,



Phoenix Suns guard Devin Booker shoots a three-point basket during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Brooklyn Nets, Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023, in New York. The Suns won 116-112.

Associated Press

and a severe hamstring injury robbed Harden of much of his explosiveness. He hasn't even averaged 25 points since and now doesn't get much past 20. Count Booker among those who think James will never be caught.

"You might be able to do it for five seasons or 10, but 20 seasons at what he's done, I don't think it will ever be done again," the Phoenix Suns star said.

Still, perhaps there are some players who will have

a chance. Maybe it's Luka Doncic, who like James has lived up to the hype that followed him into the NBA. Or maybe it's Victor Wembanyama, who will try to do the same starting next season.

Maybe it's a player who hasn't even been born yet, just as James wasn't when Kareem Abdul-Jabbar set the previous record in 1984. Here's a look at some of the possibilities:

Jayson Tatum, Boston: Tatum went toe-to-toe with

James in the 2018 Eastern Conference finals, when he finished with more points in a postseason than any rookie other than Abdul-Jabbar. The All-NBA forward averaged better than 26 points the last two seasons, is at nearly 31 per game this one and doesn't turn 25 until next month. Keep up this season's average for the next 13 and he could be toe-to-toe with James again.

Luka Doncic, Dallas. Playing professionally in Spain

before coming to the U.S. had him ready to make a quick splash in the NBA, and he's averaged better than 27 points in four of his five seasons. Doncic already has racked up more than 8,500 points and he won't even turn 24 until the end of this month. He's far more than just a scorer, perhaps more likely to surpass Russell Westbrook's career record for triple-doubles.

Devin Booker, Phoenix. Booker can get as hot as anybody in the league, as he showed when he scored 70 points in Boston in 2017 at 20 years old, or when he had three straight with 40 or more in December. The guard just turned 26 a few months ago and already has 12,000 points. Do a little better than his 27.1 points per game this season for 12 more years and he could make things interesting.

Giannis Antetokounmpo, Milwaukee. Perhaps he never really had a chance at the career scoring record after managing just 525 points (6.8 per game) as a rookie. But few players work harder to improve than the Greek Freak, who may have replaced James as the NBA's most unstoppable athletic force. He just turned 28 and is in his fourth straight season averaging better than 28 points. □

# Brittney Griner absent from USA camp, but keeping in touch

By **DOUG FEINBERG**  
AP Basketball Writer

Brittney Griner texted her good friend Diana Taurasi on Tuesday morning asking how the USA Basketball training camp was going. Griner was back in Arizona, choosing to skip the camp in Minnesota so she can be with her wife and recover from her time in a Russian jail. She returned to the U.S. in December after a dramatic prisoner swap.

"She wants to be a part of this like no one else," Taurasi said. "So, she'll get there eventually. She'll find her footing."

Taurasi said the two talk

regularly now that Griner is home in Phoenix. They workout together as well as

chat and text each other often.

"We've been on the court



United States' Diana Taurasi, left, and Brittney Griner take part in a women's basketball practice at the 2020 Summer Olympics, July 24, 2021, in Saitama, Japan.

Associated Press

together working out. We've sat down and talked for hours," Taurasi said. "It's been really nice to reconnect. It's good to see her smile. Good to give her a hug. Know she was alive and still had the ability to be thankful and happy." There was a time during Griner's 10-month ordeal in Russia that the 40-year-old Taurasi wasn't sure she'd ever see her friend again. "Every single day we suffered and hoped she'd be back and not until I saw her, did I really believe it. And just to see her smile, just to see her free, was really emotional for every-

one," Taurasi said. "And we knew, at the same time, the minute she got into that plane and we got to Phoenix, there was going to be a whole new set of challenges, a whole new reality, a whole new way of living life for BG."

Griner has said she'll play for Phoenix again this season although she's still an unsigned free agent. She hasn't talked about her international future and potentially playing for the U.S. at the Olympics next year in Paris.

She's helped the U.S. win two gold medals at the Olympics already. □



# Super Bowl has rare matchup of top 2 regular-season teams

By **JOSH DUBOW**  
AP Pro Football Writer

This year's Super Bowl features a rare matchup of the NFL's top two teams from the regular season. The Philadelphia Eagles and Kansas City Chiefs were the league's only 14-game winners, marking just the sixth time since the 1970 merger that the squads with sole possession of the two best records in the regular season met for the championship. The last time it happened came after the 2013 season when Seattle beat Denver 43-8 in a matchup of 13-win teams. That blowout was relatively typical of these meetings, with the average margin of victory in the previous five



Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes, right, and Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts speak to the media during the NFL football Super Bowl 57 opening night, Monday, Feb. 6, 2023, in Phoenix.

Associated Press

powerhouse matchups being 21 points.

The closest game was Washington's 37-24 win over Buffalo following the 1991 season.

The three others featured San Francisco beating Miami 38-16 after the 1984 season, Dallas topping Denver 27-10 to cap the 1977 season and Oakland beating Minnesota 32-14 the previous year.

Since seeding began in 1975, this is the 15th time the top team in each conference made it to the Super Bowl.

The previous time came after the 2017 season when the Eagles won their first Super Bowl championship by beating New England 41-33.

This is also the third time both Super Bowl teams won at least 14 games in the regular season, although both Kansas City and Philadelphia needed wins in the added 17th game to get there. Atlanta and Denver did it in 16-game seasons in 1998, and Miami and San Francisco in 1984.

The Chiefs and Eagles also have been in control all postseason, with neither team trailing in the playoffs. The only other times both Super Bowl teams did that came in the 2004 season (Patriots vs. Eagles), 1991 season (Bills vs. Washington) and 1966 season (Packers vs. Chiefs).

**AIR IT OUT**

Patrick Mahomes will try to do something that has never been done before in the NFL by following up a regular season when he led the league in yards passing with a Super Bowl title. Mahomes threw for 5,250 yards during the regular season 511 more than second-place Justin Herbert for the largest gap between first and second place since Kurt Warner beat out Peyton Manning by 699 yards in 2001.

The only player to reach the Super Bowl after throwing for more yards in the regular season than Mahomes was Manning, with a record 5,477 in 2013. □

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